

Interview of Chief Warrant Officer 5 K. NORWOOD, USMC
Ground Watch Officer, II MEF Forward, (MNF-W)

1 Q. What--what was your understanding of what we were here
2 to talk to you about?

3 A. This incident, sir.

4 Q. Okay. And did you do something to refresh your
5 recollection about the incident when you found out?

6 A. No, sir.

7 Q. How was it described to you when it was identified to
8 you?

9 A. The meeting described to me? I don't understand.

10 Q. When you were told that you were coming here to talk to
11 us today.

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. How was the incident identified to you that we wanted
14 to talk to you about?

15 A. I just received an e-mail, sir, that there would be a
16 15-6, which I didn't know what that was either, sir.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. Investigation going on around the--now, I heard--I
19 heard in the newspaper, I don't know, a couple of weeks or so
20 ago about the Marines in Haditha and being investigated for this
21 and, I--you know, again, sir. It just didn't----

22 Q. It didn't register as an event that----

23 A. Not out of the ordinary, sir, because, I mean, we had
24 major operations in ~~Kuseba~~, you know, insurgents using houses

Interview of Chief Warrant Officer 5 K. NORWOOD, USMC
Ground Watch Officer, II MEF Forward, (MNF-W)

1 with civilians in the basement with not knowing. Insurgents
2 utilizing children as shields for implanting IEDs, I mean these-
3 -I mean, we had this everyday. And as the Ground Watch Officer,
4 I mean, I was so engaged. I mean, it just happened, and I don't
5 think you get sensitized to it, but it happened everyday, sir.
6 But the answer to your question, I got an e-mail concerning the
7 investigation of the Haditha incident, sir.

8 Q. Okay. I have one final question, or maybe two.

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 Q. When these story boards get built, they are used to
11 brief the ~~CS~~?

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. Do you do anything else with them? Do you push them
14 back down to the division?

15 A. Well, sometimes we did, but I posted them on the shared
16 drive for the MNF-West. You know, they are posted there for all
17 to see, and also I would courtesy up to MNC-I, because it is
18 their ultimate authority CCIR that we were--now that I saw it's
19 our number five, it's MNC-I's CCIR number six and our CSNE
20 number five. So, I would always e-mail it up, sir, to our LNO
21 there and I would always call, especially when a Marine was
22 killed, I would call and follow up, "Did you receive the story
23 board on that?" And it was in the briefing everyday.

Interview of Colonel T. CARIKER, USMC
G3, II MEF Forward, (MNF-W)

1 Questions by Colonel Ewers:

2 Q. Starns turn around and take ~~10th~~ Marines from you?

3 A. Right. Right.

4 Questions by Colonel Connell:

5 Q. And did you see, during that time, you stayed until
6 what, January 31st or up to----?

7 A. Right.

8 Q. Did you ever see anymore, any numbers like that high,
9 for fifteen at a time?

10 A. Well, we were accused--well as far as being reported,
11 yes. We would have civilians reported killed. I can't
12 remember, mainly up when we were doing Steel Curtain, when we
13 get fire from a building and the initial reports the building is
14 dropped and they'd estimate, you know, battle damage. But
15 afterwards, they might find some civilians in there that they
16 didn't know was in. But they were well within the rules of
17 engagement proportionality of response. And I'd have to go, you
18 know, we would, unfortunately, you would get civilian
19 casualties. I mean, whether it's a result of our action or
20 others actions, you know, discovering twenty bodies, throats
21 slit, twenty bodies, you know, beheaded, twenty bodies here,
22 twenty bodies there. Grenade attacks on a check point, and, you

Interview of Colonel T. CARIKER, USMC
G3, II MEF Forward, (MNF-W)

1 know, collateral with civilians. But, I can't remember if we
2 had, I think, you know, we wouldn't see fifteen all the time,
3 but it wasn't--it wasn't something that would be an alarm like,
4 "Hey, what the hell is going on down there." You would see some
5 of those every once in a while, and they would be investigated.
6 They would be taken a look at. But, you know, nothing that came
7 along that day. And again, I can't remember, I couldn't even
8 remember the event. And everything I'm telling you is
9 constructed by reading through. I couldn't even tell you with
10 one percent of accuracy whether I even saw or was informed of
11 this event on the day it happened. I don't even know where I
12 physically was at the time. I might have been somewhere else.

13 RC: I don't have any more questions.

14 The interview ended at 1513, 31 March 2006.

15
16 I certify that the above transcription is a true and accurate
17 representation of the interview.

18

19

20

21

22 R. A. Connell, Colonel USMC

23

Interview of Sergeant Major E.T. SAX, USMC
Sergeant Major, 3d Battalion, 1st Marines

1 when I left the COC.

2 Q. You were monitoring the battalion net, right?

3 A. Yes, sir.

4 Q. Not listening on any company tacs?

5 A. I was not listening to company tacs. I know in

6 the COC they can monitor company tacs, but what

7 they have out in the open is battalion tac one.

8 Q. Okay. Do you recall -- or when was the first time

9 you recall hearing that there had been non-Marine

10 casualties?

11 A. Before we went out in town, if I remember

12 correctly, sir. I know for sure when we got out

13 in town we heard about some non-Marine dead.

14 Specifically, females and children and that's

15 obviously a big concern.

16 Q. Okay. And did you discuss it with the Battalion

17 Commander?

18 A. We did talk a little bit about it. I'm sure, sir,

19 at some point, you know talking about -- both of

20 us were in Fallujah. He obviously spent some time

21 at the regiment and my last tours I was at the

22 regiment in Al Qarma in Fallujah and we kind of

23 talked along the same lines of some of the kids

24 and women we ended up shooting in ECPs VCP, pull

Interview of Sergeant Major E.T. SAX, USMC
Sergeant Major, 3d Battalion, 1st Marines

1 up in the car at night -- I hate to use that
2 example but when a car doesn't stop, it crosses
3 the trigger line, Marines engage and, yes, sir
4 there are people inside the car that are killed
5 that have nothing to do with it.

6 Q. Were any of those discussions, do you recall,
7 concerning what happened on 19 November?

8 A. It either happened later on that night, sir, or
9 probably the next day, I'm sure.

10 Q. Did you hear who reported those casualties as KIA
11 and EKIA, to the Battalion Commander?

12 A. No, I don't, sir. I don't remember who reported
13 it or hear that reported to him via radio.

14 Q. Was there any issue as far as you can see with was
15 there an RFI sent down from Battalion Commander to
16 company asking what was going on with the civilian
17 casualties?

18 A. No, I don't remember an RFI going down to company,
19 sir. I probably should have stayed in the COC and
20 probably obviously know a lot more than I know at
21 this point. I automatically assumed if any
22 casualty was called over that was friendly KIA or
23 friendly WIA or neutral KIA or neutral WIA, the CO
24 at some point is going to start asking questions.

Interview of Sergeant Major E.T. SAX, USMC
Sergeant Major, 3d Battalion, 1st Marines

1 A. I know he talked to the Colonel one on one, sir.
2 I don't know if he interviewed him. I did talk to
3 the Colonel. I know that.

4 Q. Okay.

5 COL CONNELL: Sergeant Major, you were in Fallujah?

6 A. Yes, sir. I fought in the city.

7 Q. This particular incident was to date the biggest
8 incident this battalion saw; correct?

9 A. I would say, sir, that -- I mean, I don't know how
10 well known it is; but obviously, the mosque
11 shooting out here, it was my sniper Sergeant
12 Kane -- he was exonerated of everything -- I'll
13 say I can't even put that in the same spectrum as
14 this. If some of the things I'm hearing are
15 absolutely true then we could have some issues.

16 Q. So I guess what I'm kind of getting at is when you
17 heard -- when you finally got the number down, did
18 that -- what was your thought process? Did you
19 just say that that happens when you have to clear
20 a house, through experience -- but it was awful
21 high or did you think it was high?

22 A. Didn't think it was that, sir, we had fights
23 people were in and fragged homes inside of
24 Fallujah and found females inside the homes, not a

Interview of Sergeant Major E.T. SAX, USMC
Sergeant Major, 3d Battalion, 1st Marines

1 lot of children obviously, sir. I mean,
2 throughout the time in five months in Al Qarma, I
3 had Marines shoot children in cars and deal with
4 the Marines individually one on one about it
5 because they have a hard time dealing with that.
6 The thing I would always ask them was, you know,
7 they crossed the trigger line? Sergeant Major, I
8 thought it was, this, this, this. Roger. Did you
9 use EOF. Good, and the deal with it was that
10 child was still dead, Sergeant Major. Did you
11 know the child was in the backseat? No, Sergeant
12 Major. Would you have shot in that direction. No
13 Sergeant Major. I hate to see but there it is.
14 But I don't see that as your fault at that time.
15 Because he is going to have to live with that for
16 the rest of his life and that is a hard thing to
17 do. It is one thing to kill an insurgent in a
18 head on fight. It is a whole different thing --
19 and I hate to say it, the way we are raised in
20 America -- to injure a female or injure a child or
21 in the worse case, kill a female or kill a child.

22 COL EWERS: You indicated that based on what you have heard
23 there was some things here that might create an
24 issue. What had you heard that you were concerned

Interview of Colonel J. LEDOUX, USMC
Chief of Staff, II MEF Forward

1 Just like the Ambassadors cousin, the NCIS guys came to the same
2 conclusion, you know, that the initial guys did.

3 JE: Anything else?

4 Questions by Colonel Connell:

5 Q. Aside from a JDAM or something like that, and aside
6 from finding twenty bodies in a soccer field or civilians, what
7 you believed to be civilians with their throats cut, we've heard
8 various people talk about that out west, do you recall where we
9 had an actual engagement like that, had that many civilians
10 killed?

11 A. This is not unusual to have--we had escalation of
12 forces where you have, not this many, but, you know, seven
13 killed in a van or something that kept barreling into the thing
14 and didn't respond to anything. They just kept coming and kept
15 coming, kept coming. But to have, like I'm saying, that you can
16 see the numbers yourself, just thousands of incidents, thousands
17 of noncombatant deaths as well as, you know, enemy. It's just
18 that there is a pretty tough mix out there. You're being--and
19 the guys that are trying to do it in such a way that it does put
20 you in a difficult position where you're being ambushed and your
21 enemy really has no concern about the Iraqis, and in fact, you
22 know, is trying to create situations, even through their IO
23 campaigns with fake videos where you'd have things come up, or

Interview of Colonel J. LEDOUX, USMC
Chief of Staff, II MEF Forward

1 Marines killed so many guys and they are at this hospital or
2 that hospital and then all of a sudden, you know, you see the
3 same picture thing over and over again where you allegedly, you
4 know, it's like the MEU-SOC playbook, where they pull out the
5 Marines kill, you know, forty civilians and innocent people, you
6 know, and start playing that. That's all bullshit, but you
7 know, it gets people spinning and it's just part of their IO
8 game. And I think part of their IO game too, is, you know, to
9 try to put you in a tough spot where it is hard to distinguish
10 the insurgent from the, you know, from the civilian. Your guys
11 got to make hard calls all the time out there.

12 Q. You referred to investigations of EOF incidents. There
13 was a requirement that if a death or serious injury had resulted
14 from and EOF to a civilian that there was an investigation.

15 A. Right.

16 Q. Did that apply the entire time you were out there or
17 did that just show up?

18 A. No, that was something that came in when EOF became
19 more of a concern. You know, as the government started to gain
20 some traction and began to see things change. You know, more
21 emphasis on escalation of force, more concern about detainees,
22 how many you're detaining, how long you were detaining them for.
23 There became more and more concern about those kinds of issues

Interview of Colonel J. LEDOUX, USMC
Chief of Staff, II MEF Forward

1 as the new government, you know, got more traction and, you
2 know, started to feel more comfortable, I guess with their
3 governmental role. I think this will be the case as time goes
4 on. There will be more and more concern about prisoners and,
5 you know, having almost crime scene type evidence if you were
6 going to arrest some guy as you would in the States, that kind
7 of thing. It will be more rule of law type stuff vice
8 traditional combat. And so, you know, over time, I think things
9 morphed more and more and more into tighter requirements, you
10 know, and that piece with escalation of force, because there
11 really were a lot of people getting killed all over, you know,
12 Iraq on escalation of force.

13 Q. Do you remember when, about, that requirement came?

14 A. I can not remember exactly. I would say, I would say
15 after the referendum. Sometime after it, which was October.

16 Q. That was October.

17 A. I think sometime after the referendum, escalation of
18 force became kind of a more and more larger issue. It's just
19 hard to come up with good techniques to, you know, whether it's
20 a pop up or whatever you had to try to get people's attention
21 and warn them off, signs, or whatever. It just seems like all
22 the same thing, it didn't work too well. You even had the
23 barriers. You know, guys would go through serpentines and

Interview of Colonel J. LEDOUX, USMC
Chief of Staff, II MEF Forward

1 barriers and just keep coming. You know, and it would turn out,
2 I was beginning to wonder whether a lot of the Iraqis had bad
3 vision, you know, so whether they couldn't see.

4 Q. That theory's been thrown out there a lot.

5 A. Yeah. I know a lot they can't read.

6 Q. Well, I think that they don't have very good
7 optometrists.

8 A. They don't have glasses and stuff. It really makes you
9 wonder because some of the things that they would do just to
10 keep coming. You know, it's hard to imagine they would just
11 keep coming, but sometimes they do

12 Q. That's all we've got for you.

13 A. Yeah. I wish I could remember more, but this incident
14 didn't really, you know, ping on me as something that was, you
15 know, that I remembered at all.

16 Q. Well, we anticipated that possibility but we needed to
17 talk to you anyway.

18 The interview ended at 1535, 31 March 2006.

19

20

21

Interview of Colonel S. DAVIS, USMC
Commanding Officer, RCT-2

1 unknown.

2 Q. But here you've got specific allegations, whatever the
3 source, however suspect--however suspicious you are of the
4 source, that your Marines killed guys in ways that they
5 shouldn't have killed them.

6 A. I asked my ~~CS~~, my Judge Advocate, my ~~PAO~~, "Okay, what do
7 we have here? All right. Let's go back and review the story
8 boards." We reviewed the story boards, talked to Chessani,
9 there is no meat here. If I am not mistaken, McGirk's
10 allegations are that he had been contacted by the Mayor of
11 Haditha, that the Americans had slaughtered people and that
12 there was a video of that. Now I have never seen this video but
13 I've been told it's films of the deceased in a morgue or
14 something along that line. Haditha is a special place for the
15 insurgents. It was the center of their information operations,
16 operations. When we did Operation River Gate we overran a
17 facility, captured it, ten stack computers, each one capable of
18 producing ten CD's simultaneously. So if you have a beheading,
19 and IED incident, within ten minutes you get 100 CDs out in the
20 sukes. And this is all part of the murder intimidation
21 campaign. We to this day don't know why, outside of the obvious
22 strategic nature of Haditha, why Haditha is so important to the
23 enemy. I mean, it figures greatly in their history, the revolt
24 against the British of 1920. Quite clearly, it is very

Interview of Colonel S. DAVIS, USMC
Commanding Officer, RCT-2

1 strategic terrain for them for other than just the geographic
2 reasons. They don't want us in that town. We are well aware of
3 that. [The Mayor, if he is not an insurgent himself, he is
4 clearly an insurgent sympathizer, which Colonel Chessani dealt
5 with routinely through out that time.] In my mind this was all
6 part of a play. They could not get what they wanted through
7 Chessani, this was never hidden, this was never covered up, so
8 they go outside to let the press come in and try to work it as
9 an angle to move us out of there.

10 Q. Yeah, and again, to tag along on that thought, just
11 common sense tells me that, you know, I am very suspicious of
12 these allegations based on the source of the allegations. But,
13 my first response would be, "Okay, we need to know, no kidding,
14 what happened down there so that we can respond."

15 A. I never felt that we didn't know what happened down
16 there.

17 Q. All right. Well, let me ask you this then, the
18 investigation that Colonel Watt conducted, did you have any
19 visibility on that?

20 A. I received a copy of it. I have not read it in detail.

21 Q. Just a summary of the facts, the salient facts, is that
22 Marines go into one house, eight--six people killed in the first
23 house based on their clearing the house----

24 A. Were the people killed clearing the house, or were

National Security
Council
Staff
Office
of
Special
Operations
-
CDR's
of
the
1st
Marine
Division

YMF
AT
CS

Interview of Colonel R. KELLY, USMC
Staff Judge Advocate, II MEF Forward (MNF-W)

1 relationship with NCIS and I could just walk over and talk to
2 those guys and they sent someone over.

3 We also had the incident where, I think it was RCT-8
4 or RCT-2, I can't remember, whichever one was co-located in
5 Fallujah. We had the one where Marines had photographed
6 themselves taking shots at people. And, we immediately called
7 NCIS in and confiscated their little camera. And, I believe
8 Kent told me they both got thirty months at a GCM for their--I
9 don't know if they charged them with attempted murder or what
10 they charged them with, but I know they were both court-
11 martialed in a GCM.

12 That was another example of somebody doing something
13 way out of the ordinary and us calling NCIS in to assist us in
14 investigating that matter.

15 Q. Do you recall ever having your attention drawn to a SIG
16 Event or some other report of an incident where the sheer number
17 of civilian casualties caused you to say----

18 A. I felt bad when the guys from, I think this is right,
19 3/25, and there were several of them, and they were in a vehicle
20 and it was blown up. And I remember them having to send pieces
21 of them back to Dover to try to identify them. But, that was
22 the result, I believe, of three 155s that had been strapped
23 together and they went across it in the vehicle. I remember

Interview of Colonel T. CARIKER, USMC
G3, II MEF Forward, (MNF-W)

1 Questions by Colonel Ewers:

2 Q. Starns turn around and take ~~10th~~ Marines from you?

3 A. Right. Right.

4 Questions by Colonel Connell:

5 Q. And did you see, during that time, you stayed until
6 what, January 31st or up to----?

7 A. Right.

8 Q. Did you ever see anymore, any numbers like that high,
9 for fifteen at a time?

10 A. Well, we were accused--well as far as being reported,
11 yes. We would have civilians reported killed. I can't
12 remember, mainly up when we were doing Steel Curtain, when we
13 get fire from a building and the initial reports the building is
14 dropped and they'd estimate, you know, battle damage. But
15 afterwards, they might find some civilians in there that they
16 didn't know was in. But they were well within the rules of
17 engagement proportionality of response. And I'd have to go, you
18 know, we would, unfortunately, you would get civilian
19 casualties. I mean, whether it's a result of our action or
20 others actions, you know, discovering twenty bodies, throats
21 slit, twenty bodies, you know, beheaded, twenty bodies here,
22 twenty bodies there. Grenade attacks on a check point, and, you

Interview of Colonel T. CARIKER, USMC
G3, II MEF Forward, (MNF-W)

1 know, collateral with civilians. But, I can't remember if we
2 had, I think, you know, we wouldn't see fifteen all the time,
3 but it wasn't--it wasn't something that would be an alarm like,
4 "Hey, what the hell is going on down there." You would see some
5 of those every once in a while, and they would be investigated.
6 They would be taken a look at. But, you know, nothing that came
7 along that day. And again, I can't remember, I couldn't even
8 remember the event. And everything I'm telling you is
9 constructed by reading through. I couldn't even tell you with
10 one percent of accuracy whether I even saw or was informed of
11 this event on the day it happened. I don't even know where I
12 physically was at the time. I might have been somewhere else.

13 RC: I don't have any more questions.

14 The interview ended at 1513, 31 March 2006.

15
16 I certify that the above transcription is a true and accurate
17 representation of the interview.

18

19

20

21

22 R. A. Connell, Colonel USMC

23

Major General Johnson, USMC
Commanding General, MNF-W

1 Q. If it was reported that 15 non-combatants were killed,
2 however they were killed, then was that not a significant event?

3 A. I think it was, and it was reported to me, and we reported
4 it. But as I look back on it, I don't -- even though it was a
5 significant event, I did not feel compelled -- I didn't feel I
6 had information at that point in time that would cause me to go
7 back and look at it. There were other -- this was November, so
8 we had been at it since March. And examples of many civilians
9 being killed at a given time were precedent for that. It
10 happened all the time, not necessarily in MNF-West all the time,
11 but throughout the whole country.

12

13 So, you know, maybe -- I guess maybe if I was sitting here
14 at Quantico and heard that 15 civilians were killed, I would
15 have been surprised and shocked and gone -- done more to look
16 into it. But at that point in time, I felt that that was -- had
17 been, for whatever reason, part of that engagement and felt that
18 it was just a cost of doing business on that particular
19 engagement. It never crossed -

20

21 Q. In other words, that particular event, you know, you didn't
22 consider, I guess you could say, anymore significant than any
23 others that had gone on enough to --

24 A. To further investigate?

Major General Johnson, USMC
Commanding General, MNF-W

1 Q. -- did you notify General Vines of this or did you just let
2 the regular reporting notify the Corps that all of this had
3 happened? You know, this was one piece of --

4 A. I think that I -- I don't know for sure whether I notified
5 General Vines or not. I have no record of that. I believe that
6 we were in Baghdad at a Commander's meeting that day; and
7 whether I was notified -- when in that process I was notified, I
8 can't recall and I can't recall if I went and told General Vines.

9

10 I think, in hindsight, I would have been more concerned
11 that they had been attacked by a coordinated attack than
12 civilians had been killed. I mean, just looking back on it, I
13 would have -- that is what I would have gone to him with in that
14 case if I did, but I can't remember if I reported it directly to
15 him or not.

16

17 Q. Was the CG of 2d Marine Division was his M.O., if you will,
18 to report incidents to you that came up on a routine basis or --

19 A. No.

20

21 Q. -- personally or any other way that would --

22 A. He would have -

23

Interview of 1st Lieutenant M.D. FRANK, USMC
Company K, 3d Battalion, 1st Marines

1 Marine who was taking pictures just to take
2 pictures and I told him to delete all those
3 pictures.

4 Q. Who was that?

5 A. That was Sergeant McDaniels, sir, now Staff
6 Sergeant, which is one of my Marines that happened
7 to be out there. I didn't mention his name. He
8 wasn't part of the squad. He just went out with
9 me.

10 Q. Okay. And you found out that he had taken pictures
11 and you told him --

12 A. He was with me, sir, and he was snapping some
13 pictures and I was like, ~~Sergeant~~, just delete
14 those because you are just getting yourself in a
15 world of trouble. So he said, Roger that, sir.

16 Q. Okay. Do you know a Marine named Briones?

17 A. Yes, sir, I do.

18 Q. Do you recall him being one of the guys that was
19 taking pictures that night?

20 A. I don't recall him being there, sir. It's just
21 that I didn't know ~~3rd~~ Platoon very well, sir, and
22 he very well could have been right next to me the
23 whole time and I don't remember him at that point.

24 Q. Do you know a Marine named Wright?